

## CHAPTER 4

# “THE TRAINING YEAR”: TEACHER INDUCTION IN JAPAN

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In 1988, the Japanese National Ministry of Education, Science, Sports, and Culture (*Monbusho*) introduced a new program of teacher induction for newly appointed teachers—that is, those in their first assignments as full-time teachers—in national and public elementary schools, lower and upper secondary schools, and schools for the disabled. This program was mandated and financially authorized through a revision in Japanese education law. Phased in over four years beginning in 1989, the program requires all newly appointed teachers to participate. As a result, all new teachers now spend at least 90 days of their first year in activities directly linked to teacher induction. In addition to this high number of training days, another significant aspect of the first-year experience is the amount of support the new teachers receive, both formally and informally, from guidance teachers and other instructional staff members. Although in place for only a few years, the program is well received by teachers, school principals, and other educators and policy makers. They believe it accelerates and systematizes the acquisition of knowledge and skills that in previous years had to be gained on a much more informal, and sometimes haphazard, basis.

### Education in Japan

*Monbusho* plays an active role in establishing the framework for education in Japan, through its involvement in areas such as curriculum, school management, and teacher certification and training. The National Education Law defines compulsory education as six years of elementary school and three years of lower secondary school. After completing compulsory education, approximately 95 percent of students enter upper secondary school. Most upper secondary schools offer a general curriculum, but, unlike elementary and lower secondary schools, are differentiated according to the academic goals and abilities of the students and, in some cases, academic or vocational specialization. About 32% of upper secondary graduates enter a four-year college or university, and another 13% enter two-year colleges.

While *Monbusho* has the authority to establish educational policy, the boards of education of the 47 prefectures (provincial level) and 12 specially designated cities are responsible

for implementing those policies at the local level. In contrast to the Northern Territory (Australia) and New Zealand, schools and classes are more similar throughout the country. As a result, students are likely to face very similar schedules, curricula, and textbooks; classes tend to be of the same size and structure; and teachers will have undergone very similar training and certification processes (although teaching certificates are awarded by prefectures and designated cities).

All schools in Japan can be divided into three groups according to the type of organization responsible for their administration: national, administered and supported solely by the national government; public, administered by prefectural boards of education and supported by both prefectural and local funds; and private, administered and supported by private foundations. The vast majority of schools are public, with the exception of kindergartens, which are predominantly private. Within prefectural boards of education, compulsory education and upper secondary schools are administered separately.

At school, it is common for a class to stay together with the same teacher or set of teachers for more than one year. Class sizes range from about 30 students in the elementary schools to 40 in lower secondary schools to 50 in upper secondary schools, although *Monbusho* is making reduction of class size a priority for the next several years. Within classes, students are often separated into groups that serve as the basis for many academic and non-academic activities. The emphasis on group activities forms a bond between students of the same class year, which can have relevance throughout their lives.

## **The Teaching Profession in Japan**

### **Basic Data**

In 1992, there were 935,000 teachers employed in over 40,000 national and public elementary, lower secondary, upper secondary, and special education schools. About 60 percent of all teachers in Japan are male, with females holding the majority of positions in elementary schools. The average age of teachers in Japan is roughly 40 years, and the average years of experience is approximately 15. Teachers at member-level schools are employees of the national government.

### **Preservice Training and Certification**

Teachers may receive their preservice training at any university or junior college with a teacher training course approved by *Monbusho*. Approximately 75 percent of all junior colleges, universities, and graduate schools have approved certification courses for teacher training. In addition to junior colleges and universities, there is one member-level teacher

training university in each prefecture. *Monbusho* standards specify the number of credit hours required in subject specialty courses and pedagogy courses. Generally, more courses are required in pedagogy for those intending to teach the lower grade levels, whereas those intending to teach the upper grade levels are required to take most of their courses in their subject specialty.

In addition to academic course work, teacher education programs require a practicum. People wishing to become elementary school teachers spend at least four weeks in a teaching practice situation and those intending to become lower and upper secondary school teachers spend at least two weeks. The practicum is usually preceded and followed by a total of 15 - 30 hours (one credit) of related instruction. The national teacher training universities have model schools attached to them for the purpose of teacher training. In other cases, the institution makes special arrangements with the prospective teacher's alma mater or other cooperating school.

## **Teaching Conditions**

People entering the teaching profession in Japan can expect to have a great deal of responsibility placed on them for the academic and social development of their students, especially their homeroom class. A Japanese teacher's sense of duty to his or her students extends beyond instruction and counseling in school to responsibility for students' behavior outside of school as well. Teachers encourage their students to become good citizens, support their moral development, and participate in disciplinary action when students misbehave. One commentator, who has published a narrative on his experiences teaching in a Japanese school, supports these observations. He describes two situations in which teachers were called upon to intervene in a student's life, outside the academic realm — once with a student caught drinking at home and another time with a student “playing hooky.” According to this commentator, it is quite common for teachers to take on such responsibilities, and such teachers are lauded in Japan (Feiler, 1995).

Many teachers also have responsibility as supervisors of school clubs, such as sports teams or the school band. This responsibility is heaviest at the lower secondary school level, where almost all teachers are associated with a particular student club.

In addition to their responsibilities to their classes and clubs, teachers have many responsibilities as members of the school faculty. Most importantly, the teachers teaching the same grade level work together daily. Teachers' rooms in Japanese schools are designed to facilitate collaboration. Typically, all teachers sit together in one large room with their desks grouped by grade level. In most schools, the day begins with a meeting of all the staff where the day's schedule and major events are announced. Teachers then may

have the opportunity to meet within their grade level groups for a few minutes and discuss particular concerns. Longer sessions are often scheduled at other times throughout the week to discuss the study plan for the next week and discuss any issues which have arisen in the classrooms. To accommodate these duties teachers in Japan have fewer contact hours per week (15) than teachers in many Western countries, such as the United States (20-25) (White, 1994).

In contrast to teachers in many Western countries, teachers in Japan are not isolated from one another. A teacher's day is more balanced between teaching students and working with other adults to improve their teaching and the school's program.

Teachers also collaborate with the group of teachers teaching the same academic subject. They too will sometimes hold planning and discussion sessions, and may have responsibility for coordinating certain events, such as a model demonstration class that will be observed by other teachers or supervisors from outside the school. Most schools also have several faculty committees, such as student guidance, research, and school events.

Teachers in Japan, like those in the other APEC members studied, spend long hours at the school building or home to accomplish their job. It is not unusual for lower secondary school teachers to be at the school building between 60 and 70 hours per week. For instance, one writer describes an average teacher's day beginning at 7:30 a.m. and lasting until at least six in the evening, not including Saturday classes and house visits (White, 1994). (This is comparable to hours spent by many teachers in the Northern Territory, Australia and New Zealand). Often it is the younger teachers who put in the longest hours.

Traditionally, with these responsibilities comes a relatively high degree of respect in the eyes of the community. One indication of teachers' rank in society is that their level of remuneration is generally equivalent to or slightly higher than other public employees with similar academic backgrounds. Public school teachers' salaries are established and paid by the prefectural or local boards of education, based on national standards, with allowances made for number of dependents, housing, transportation, assignments to outlying areas, and administrative positions (MESCC, *Graphic*, 1994).

Japanese teachers are well-respected when compared to teachers in other societies. Teachers interviewed feel that, while respect is high compared to teachers in other societies, there has been a decline in the respect accorded teachers over the past several years. Traditionally, one reason teachers in Japan were well-respected was that they possessed a high level of education in comparison with other people in the community.

According to the teachers and administrators interviewed, as education levels of the general public have increased over the past several decades, this distinction no longer exists. Additionally, some noted that, in general, the Japanese people are becoming more likely to question traditional figures of authority.

In recent years, the media have focused on the problems associated with Japanese school life, such as high levels of stress among both teachers and students, increased rates of violence in the schools, and most recently, the problem of groups of students or entire classes singling out a particular student for harassment and bullying. Although these incidents may not be as widespread as media suggest, certainly there is increased public concern about the school environment. One teacher stated that the most common reaction when people hear he is a teacher is not, "Oh, that's impressive," but rather, "Oh, that must be very difficult." Similar sentiments were equally common in the Northern Territory, Australia and New Zealand.

## **The Teacher Induction Program**

### **Problems Specific to Newly Appointed Teachers**

Japanese schools, especially elementary and lower secondary schools, are very active and busy places. Compared to many Western schools, teachers in Japan face larger class sizes and weighty academic, guidance, and administrative responsibilities. For people new to the profession, the transition period can be overwhelming. Because the university teacher-training programs are theory-based and the period of student teaching is very brief, newly appointed teachers have very little experience dealing with children, let alone trying to lead them to higher levels of knowledge and maturity. Dealing with large numbers of parents, who are usually considerably older and may be from different backgrounds than the teacher, is another area where newly appointed teachers may have absolutely no experience. Similarly, many of the administrative duties are ones for which the new teachers have had no preparation.

Traditionally, newly employed teachers have been helped to adapt to their new situations by the informal support of the other teachers in the school. This climate of support can be found in almost any type of organization in Japanese society, where it is the responsibility of the senior members of a group to ensure that the junior members adapt successfully.

### **What Were Some of the Challenges and Surprises of Your First Year of Teaching?**

"Being fresh out of college, there was a lot I didn't understand about the world of work. The preparation I received in college was very focused of the theory of teaching and subject specific matters. The things that surprised me most and gave me the most difficulty were the large amount of non-instructional matters, such as administrative work and the challenge of dealing with students."

Junior High School Teacher (2nd year)

"When I began teaching, there were many things I had no idea about how to do, little things such as how to write on the blackboard, but also larger, less definite things such as dealing with children, and how to deal with parents. I was also not prepared for the large amount of non-instructional responsibilities."

Elementary School Teacher (3rd year)

"This first year has been very difficult. I am much busier than I had expected to be. It is entirely different from my student teaching experience. Every day brings a new surprise."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

"I have really come to feel the weight of my responsibilities and the importance of my own behavior and words. At the same time I have come to understand many of the joys of being a teacher."

High School Teacher (1st year)

"Before I began teaching, I had not realized the extent to which teachers would be responsible for so many different areas aside from their subject specialty, such as international understanding, environmental education, media (information sciences) education — these expectations coming not so much from the students' parents or community, but from society as a whole."

Junior High School Teacher (2nd Year)

In more recent years, boards of education of prefectures and designated cities developed special training sessions to help newly employed teachers adapt to their new lifestyles, but they were conducted on a much smaller scale than the current teacher induction program. With partial financial support from *Monbusho*, Boards of Education conducted ten-day training sessions for newly appointed teachers. These ten days were usually spread over the course of the teachers' first year and had a prominent focus on observing other teachers' lessons. In addition to differences in content and the number of days of training, one major difference between these training programs and the Teacher Induction Program introduced in 1988 is that the ten-day training programs were not mandated by national law, and their implementation was not as closely monitored.

## Establishment of Induction Training

The call for nationally supported, intensive training for newly appointed teachers began in the 1970s. In 1972, the Minister of Education's Standing Subcommittee on Teacher Training recommended examining the need for a formalized system of teacher induction. This call was repeated in the 1978 annual report of the Minister's Central Education Council, the supervisory body to the Standing Subcommittee.

The basic principles of the present system of teacher induction, including the goals and methods, were proposed in 1986 in the Second Report of the Prime Minister's Ad Hoc Council on Education. The following year, the Minister of Education's Standing Subcommittee on Teacher Training issued a report entitled, *Measures to Improve the Abilities of Educational Personnel*. In addition to recommendations regarding teacher appointment and certification policies, the report outlined detailed recommendations for a system of teacher induction. Aspects of the program addressed included: general goals and content, length of training, out-of-school training, in-school training, the use of guidance teachers to mentor the newly appointed teachers, the provision of supplemental teachers, and the roles of various educational bodies. These recommendations were developed by a working group of school principals and university presidents.

In 1988, the National Law on Special Regulation for Educational Public Service Employees was revised to require that all newly employed teachers—those in their first assignments as full-time teachers—at national and other public elementary and secondary schools participate in a one-year training program during their first year of employment. Provisions of the law include the use of guidance teachers and relief teachers to ensure that schools have adequate staffing to compensate for the time devoted to the training of new teachers.

The teacher induction program was phased in over four years, starting in 1989 with all elementary schools. The program was implemented in all lower secondary schools in 1990, in all upper secondary schools in 1991, and in all schools for the disabled in 1992. For each level, in the year prior to implementation, work groups were convened and 30 prefectures selected to pilot model programs. Since initial implementation, *Monbusho* has retained, with minor modifications, its guidelines for the program.

## Basic Program Features and Responsibility for Implementation

**Member-level Guidelines.** *Monbusho* guidelines outline the general features of the program, including content, methods of delivery, the roles of the various levels of administration, and the system of monitoring implementation.

Although teacher induction is a member-level program supported by law and guided by *Monbusho*, the program guidelines call for a degree of flexibility to allow program administrators at each successive level down to implement the program as is most appropriate for their own situation. Thus, as the program moves from the member to the school level, the aspects of program content and delivery become more detailed. Information flows upwards from the schools (using, for example, site visits and evaluation forms) to provide feedback and information on program implementation.

Following is a brief description of the basic features of the program. They will be discussed in greater detail in a later section.

I. Purpose — To improve newly appointed teachers' practical teaching abilities, deepen their sense of mission, and broaden their knowledge and understanding.

### II. Method of Delivery

A. In-school Training — No less than 60 days, under the leadership of a designated guidance teacher (generally two days each week).

B. Out-of-School Training — No less than 30 days, under the direction of the prefectural Education Center (generally one day each week).

1. Residential Workshops — As part of the out-of-school training, a five-day, four-night residential workshop.

2. Training Cruises — For selected teachers, based on the recommendation of the board of education of the prefecture or designated city.

III. Content — Topics should include fundamental aspects of the education system and school life, classroom management, academic instruction training, moral education, special activities, and student guidance. See Exhibit 1 for *Monbusho*-suggested topics within each of those categories.

### IV. Related Personnel



Guidance Teacher — Assigned to each newly appointed teacher and responsible for the school-based portion of teacher induction program.

Subject Specialist — Appointed to handle subject-specific training in cases where the academic subjects in which the first-year teacher and the guidance teacher hold licenses are different. (In lower and upper secondary schools.)

Principal of the School — Has ultimate responsibility for the in-school portion of the program. He or she shall ensure that the other teachers of the school cooperate with and assist the guidance teacher in the training of the first-year teacher.

V. Reduction of Duties and Supplemental Instructors — To facilitate participation in and responsibilities for training activities of the newly appointed teachers, guidance teachers, and subject specialists, the hours of instruction and administrative duties assigned to them may be reduced by the principal. To compensate for the reduced assignments of these teachers, the board of education of the prefecture or designated city should employ supplemental instructors. Related costs shall be split evenly between the prefecture and the national government.

**Roles of the Prefectural Boards of Education.** Based on the guidelines provided by *Monbusho*, the boards of education of the prefectures and designated cities are responsible for designing a one-year training plan appropriate for their conditions. This plan must include both in-school and out-of-school training. *Monbusho* requires that the board of education convene conferences of principals, other administrators, guidance teachers, and subject specialists to provide input into program design. In addition to the one-year training plan, the boards of education also will develop other materials, such as texts and guidebooks for the newly appointed teachers and their guidance teachers.

## EXHIBIT 1

### Example on Content of Teacher Induction Training, for the Upper Secondary School Teacher, Designed by Monbusho

Fundamental Knowledge	Homeroom Management	Academic Instruction	Special Activities	Student Guidance
<b>FIRST TERM</b>				
<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●The Purpose of School Education</li> <li>●Mental Preparation for Being a Teacher</li> <li>●Anti-discrimination Education</li> <li>●Lunch Period Duties</li> <li>●Promoting Health and Safety in Schools</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Current Condition of and Themes in Education (Part I)</li> <li>●Teachers' Duties and Responsibilities as Civil Servants</li> <li>●Anti-discrimination Education</li> <li>●The Importance of Moral Education</li> <li>●Teaching Moral Education (Part I)</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Developing Homeroom Management Plans</li> <li>●Developing Homeroom Organization Charts</li> <li>●Initial Administrative Duties</li> <li>●Developing a Parent Association</li> <li>●Establishing a Healthy Classroom Environment</li> <li>●Conducting Home Visits</li> <li>●Establishing Student Groups Within the Homeroom</li> <li>●Preparing Report Cards</li> <li>●First-Term Assessment of Homeroom Management</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●The Importance of Homeroom Management</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Writing a Weekly Teaching Plan</li> <li>●Basic Instructional Techniques</li> <li>●Lesson Observation and Practice (Part I, II, &amp; III)</li> <li>●Understanding Students During Lessons</li> <li>●Using Instructional Materials</li> <li>●Improving Lessons (Part I)</li> <li>●Writing and Correcting Tests</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Instructional Materials: Methods and Practice</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Overall Plan for Special Activities</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Education and Special Activities</li> <li>●Conducting Homeroom Special Activities (Part I)</li> <li>●The Importance of Guidance Counseling</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Developing Proper Attitudes for Learning</li> <li>●Techniques for Working With Groups</li> <li>●Group and Individual Guidance</li> <li>●Methods for Praising and Disciplining Students</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Understanding Students</li> <li>●Methods for Understanding Students' Situations</li> <li>●Relationships Between Students and Teachers</li> </ul>
<b>SUMMER RECESS (All activities out-of-school)</b>				
●Experiential Training	●Evaluation of Homeroom Management	●Application of Instructional Equipment ●Lesson Analysis and Evaluation	●The Essence of Leading Special Activities ●Practice in Leading Overnight Group Excursions	●Understanding and Dealing With Problem Behavior ●Academic Counseling

## EXHIBIT 1

### Example on Content of Teacher Induction Training, for the Uppersecondary School Teacher, Designed by Monbusho (Continued)

Fundamental Knowledge	Homeroom Management	Academic Instruction	Special Activities	Student Guidance
<b>SECOND TERM</b>				
<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●In-school Organization</li> <li>●Creating a Learning Environment in School</li> <li>●Parent Teacher Organization Structure and Management</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●The Cultivation of an Educator's Perspective</li> <li>●Current Conditions and Themes in Education (Part II)</li> <li>●Teaching Moral Education (Part II)</li> <li>●Understanding Students With Disabilities</li> <li>●Government Guidelines for Teaching and Curriculum Development</li> <li>●School System Organization and Management</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●2nd-Term Homeroom Management Plan</li> <li>●Participating in Class Year Teachers' Team</li> <li>●Homeroom Correspondence</li> <li>●Meeting With Students' Guardians</li> <li>●2nd-Term Assessment of Homeroom Management</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Leading Homeroom Groups</li> <li>●Relationship Between Class Year Management and Homeroom Management</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Improving Lessons (Part II)</li> <li>●Lesson Observation and Practice (Part IV, V, VI, &amp; VII)</li> <li>●Individualization of Teaching Guidelines</li> <li>●Forming Classes Based on Ability (Individual and Group Instruction)</li> <li>●Use of Instructional Equipment</li> <li>●Developing and Using Teaching Materials and Tools</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Essence of Instruction and Assessment</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Practice in Leading School Events</li> <li>●Practice in Advising Student Government Activities</li> <li>●Practice in Leading School Club Activities</li> <li>●Guidance Counseling</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Conducting Homeroom Special Activities (Part II)</li> <li>●Leading School Events</li> </ul>	<u>In-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Individualized Guidance</li> <li>●Case Studies of Problem Behavior</li> <li>●Academic Counseling</li> <li>●System of Student Guidance in Schools</li> </ul> <u>Out-of-school:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Student Guidance on a Regional Basis</li> <li>●Student Guidance: Meaning and Application</li> <li>●Individualized Guidance</li> </ul>
<b>THIRD TERM</b>				

<u>In-school:</u> ●Promoting Practical Research ●Professional Development and Personal Growth ●Presentations on First-year Experiences  <u>Out-of-school:</u> ●Connections With In-school Training	<u>In-school:</u> ●3rd-Term Homeroom Management Plan ●Year-end Administrative Duties ●Assessment of Year 1 Management and Plan for Year 2	<u>In-school:</u> ●Lesson Observation and Practice (Part VIII, IX, & X) ●Research for Lesson Planning ●Lesson Reflection and Assessment  <u>Out-of-school:</u> ●Developing One-Year Teaching Plans	<u>In-school:</u> ●Special Activities Reflection and Assessment
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Beyond program design and implementation, it is also the role of prefectural and designated city boards of education, working through their regional education offices, where they exist, to assign newly appointed teachers to the schools. In the Japanese school system, a significant portion of teachers are shifted each year among the schools of a given region. Thus, any school can be the recipient of a new teacher. In making assignments, the regional education offices ensure that new teachers are distributed evenly among the area's schools so as not to drain the resources of any one particular school. In 1995, approximately half of all schools with newly appointed teachers were assigned only one, while slightly fewer than half had two.

**Participation and Costs.** As mentioned earlier, as the program was implemented at their particular type of school, all newly appointed teachers have been required to participate in the program. Although the number of participants in the program rose steadily as the

## EXHIBIT 2

### Number of Participants in Teacher Induction Program and Program Costs, 1989-1995

	Elementary Schools	Lower Secondary Schools	Upper Secondary Schools	Schools for the blind, deaf, and otherwise disabled	Total Participants	Cost (In Millions of Yen)*
1989	13,103	—	—		13,103	20,477
1990	13,261	8,954			22,215	28,218
1991	13,220	9,327	5,126	—	27,573	29,607
1992	10,272	7,232	4,173	1,980	23,662	28,202
1993	8,965	6,066	3,975	1,671	20,677	28,436
1994	7,386	4,958	4,188	1,461	17,993	25,351
1995	6,431	5,112	3,943	1,358	16,844	22,619
* Figures are not adjusted for inflation.						

program was extended to the different types of schools (see Exhibit 2), the number of new teachers has been decreasing steadily over the past several years, thus program participation has fallen. The lower number of new teachers receiving appointments is a result of a decline in the number of students.

Japan's treasury supports one-half the cost of all activities related to the in-school and out-of-school training, including the salaries of the supplemental teachers and the costs of travel and materials associated with the out-of-school training. The training cruises are conducted by the member-level authority. Because the cost of the program is tied directly to the number of participants, the total cost of the program has been decreasing for the past two years. (See Exhibit 2.)

**Monitoring and Reporting.** Program implementation is closely monitored at all levels. Starting at the school, the principal submits to the board of education the one-year training plan at the beginning of the school year. At the end of the year, principals are required to submit a report on how the program was implemented, including any changes that were

made to the original plan and the comments and reflections of the newly appointed teacher, the guidance teacher, and the principal.

For the out-of-school training in some prefectures, program administrators collect brief evaluations from participants after each training session. Additionally, they conduct larger surveys at the conclusion of the program, asking participants how useful they thought the training was and if they feel the program should be changed to improve its effectiveness. These comments are used in designing the following year's program.

The boards of education of the prefectures and designated cities collect training plans and monitoring reports and incorporate that information into the standardized report they forward to *Monbusho*. These reports also include data on the numbers of newly appointed teachers; the characteristics of the schools where they are placed; and the backgrounds of the guidance teachers, subject specialists, and supplemental teachers.

## **Program Components**

**In-school training.** In-school training comprises the majority of training days for the program. Although building principals are responsible for in-school training, the most prominent faculty members in the lives of newly appointed teachers are guidance teachers and, where they exist, subject specialists.

Guidance teachers are selected by the board of education with direct oversight of the school (in some cases the prefectural or designated city board of education, in others a branch office of the prefectural board of education, and in others a local board of education) mostly based on the recommendation of the principal. They, as well as the subject specialists, are chosen from among the school's vice-principal, teaching staff, and part-time supplemental staff. Depending on the other teaching and administrative responsibilities of the guidance teacher, that teacher may have almost a full class load and a homeroom, or may have few, if any, weekly hours of instruction. Any reduction in a guidance teacher's instructional hours are offset by supplemental teachers, as mentioned above.

There are no specific prerequisites for becoming a guidance teacher, such as years of service or a particular type of training, but principals tend to select teachers with many years of experience and demonstrated ability as a teacher, and those likely to develop good relationships with younger teachers.

Most prefectures convene a meeting to foster and improve the skills of the guidance teachers and their understanding of their training functions. This represents the formal

training of guidance teachers. In addition, the guidance teachers receive guidebooks issued by the board of education. At the beginning of the school year, guidance teachers are required to prepare one-year training plans for the in-school portion of the induction program. This plan identifies the topics to be covered during each training session and the other school staff to be involved. They also must fill out training logs that report how the training was actually conducted and any particular comments on the training session.

“One thing I have learned how to do is identify things that the new teachers can't notice themselves. For example, if I am observing one of their lessons, I'll look for students' reactions that the teacher may not notice because he is writing on the blackboard or speaking with only one student. I make notes of these things and bring them up later.”

Elementary School Guidance Teacher

The training itself usually takes the form of lesson observation, demonstration classes, and consultation. (See Exhibit 3.) In lesson observations, the guidance teacher or other teachers observe the lessons of the newly appointed teacher. In demonstration classes, the new teacher visits the lessons of the guidance teacher or other teachers. Both lessons are often preceded or followed by detailed discussions of lesson plans, instructional technique, and successes or failures. Generally the newly appointed teacher has two class periods per week devoted to demonstration lessons and two to observation lessons.

### EXHIBIT 3

#### An Example of Weekly Schedule for Newly Appointed Teachers, Guidance Teachers and Subject Specialists

- Lower secondary school with 13 homeroom classes, 2 newly appointed teachers, 1 guidance teacher, and 1 subject specialist (Thursdays only).
- One teacher's subject specialty is the same as the guidance teacher's (Japanese); the other's is different (home economics).
- Shaded areas indicate training-related activities.

N1 = Newly appointed Japanese language teacher

Ob = GT or SS observation of N1 or N2 lesson

N2 = Newly appointed Home Economics teacher Dm = GT- or SS-taught demonstration class

GT = Guidance teacher

1A, 2B, etc., refer to different homeroom classes (1st year, Section A; 2nd year, Section B; etc.)

SS = Subject specialist

Pl. = Lesson planning and preparation

M = Moral education

	Monday			Tuesday			Wednesday			Thursday				Friday			Saturday		
Period	N1	N2	GT	N1	N2	GT	N1	N2	GT	N1	N2	GT	SS	N1	N2	GT	N1	N2	GT
1		1A & 1B		OUT-OF-SCHOOL TRAINING  (In weeks when out-of-school training is not held, N1 teaches classes indicated in GT column.)	1A (for N1)	Consultation: Various Topics			1D	Dm 3A & 3B	2B	Dm 3A & 3B	1D			1C	3C & 3D	2B	
2	1C				1B (for N1)	2B GT Demonstration of Lesson			1A		Meeting		Dm 2A		Dm 2A	1A	3A & 3B	2A	
3	1B	1C & 1D	2A			Ob 1D	3D	Ob 1D	1B	Ob 2C & 2D		Ob 2C & 2D	1B	3C & 3D			1B		
4	1A				2A	1C	Ob 3E		1C	2C & 2D		Pl.	Ob 1C		Ob 1C				
5					1D (for N1)	Consultation: Fundamental Knowledge				Consultation: Academic Instruction			Home-room	2A & 2B					



6	1D	3E	2B		1C (for N1)	M	3rd yr (elective )		Club	Club	Club	Pl.	Cons: Ac. Inst.	Cons: Ac. Inst.
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The consultations, usually about two or three class periods a week, involve the guidance teacher, the newly appointed teacher or teachers, and other staff members as appropriate to the topic. The consultation topics are based on the board of education guidelines. In cases where a subject specialist exists, a newly appointed teacher may have many of their consultations with that teacher.

“One instance where I think I was of particular assistance to a new teacher was with the home visits for a certain student. This teacher was a homeroom teacher and I was the assistant homeroom teacher. With one student, he had a very difficult time talking to him and his parents. Although in his induction training, he learned a lot of the theory of how to conduct home visits, he had little experience. On these visits I acted as his backup and I think this helped with his confidence. We were able to talk after the visits and I gave him some advice, which I think was helpful.”

Upper Secondary School Guidance Teacher

The work required of newly appointed teachers related to these training sessions varies. They typically keep a training journal where they enter their reflections on the session and areas they wish to focus on in the future. Often, in preparation for a visit from the guidance teacher, they prepare a detailed lesson plan. In cases where their lessons are visited by several teachers at once, the principal, or high-ranking administrators from outside the school building, the time they spend in preparation is even more substantial.

In addition to these formal opportunities for receiving advice from senior teachers, new teachers constantly receive advice, ideas, and teaching tips on an informal basis from members of the school's teaching staff. The sense of responsibility senior members feel for the training of new members is well-rooted in Japanese society, but in this case it is also an articulated feature of *Monbusho* and school policy.

Supplemental instructors are assigned to the school to compensate for the reduced teaching loads of the newly appointed teachers, guidance teachers, and subject specialists. Schools with one newly appointed teacher are assigned a supplemental instructor for three days a week, and schools with two newly appointed teachers have a full-time supplemental instructor. Sometimes these teachers have a direct connection to the new teachers, serving as substitutes on the days the newly-appointed teacher is away. In other cases, the supplemental teacher is simply another faculty member at the school.

*Monbusho* recommends that the majority of supplemental instructors be experienced teachers. In 1995, 56 percent of supplemental teachers had five years or more of teaching

experience. In some cases, they are recently retired teachers. One reason for the use of experienced teachers in this role is to offset any worries parents might have resulting from their child's teacher not only being new, but also missing several periods of instruction with the class per week.

Not only is the principal allowed to reduce the hours of instruction and administrative responsibilities of new teachers, but they may give special consideration to newly appointed teachers in other ways. As a general rule, new teachers are assigned either as homeroom or assistant homeroom teachers, but the principals tend not to assign the new teacher to classes that may be more difficult or high-profile than others. For example, in elementary schools, while 96 percent of newly appointed teachers serve as the main homeroom teacher, they tend to be assigned to third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade classes, where the students do not present the challenges unique to the very young or to those preparing to enter lower secondary school.

**Out-of School Training.** The Education Centers in each of the prefectures or designated cities implement the out-of-school training plan developed by the board of education. Depending on the related organizational structure, training, excluding field trips and the residential training, may take place at the Education Center, or it may be split among various regional and local offices. For example, in Chiba City, one of 12 designated cities, because there are no intermediary administrative organizations between the board of education and the city's schools, all the training is coordinated by the same staff members of the Education Center. On the other hand, in Gunma prefecture, the 30 days of training are divided as follows: 18 days at the prefectural Education Center, 8 days at the regional education office, and 4 days at the local board of education. The cohort of new teachers is divided accordingly for the regional and local training sessions.

Formats for out-of-school training most often include lectures, discussion groups, and field trips. (See Exhibit 4.) The lectures focus on topics directly related to situations the teachers will encounter at school, such as teaching technique, preparing instructional materials, dealing with chronic truants, handling various administrative duties, and dealing with parents. Lectures are often followed up by discussion sessions, in which teachers relate the lecture to their own experiences and exchange ideas. Group activities are common, particularly for lower and upper secondary school teachers, who may be divided by specialty subject.

## EXHIBIT 4

### Chiba City Board of Education Out-of-School Training (Elementary School Teachers)

	Mo/ Date	Format	Topic	Presenters	Location
1	Apr. 1	Lecture	Opening Ceremony "Expectations for New Teachers"		City Board of Education
2	May 20	Lecture, Special Presentation	"Education in Chiba City: Fundamental Aims and Themes" "The Joy of Creating"	Director, Chiba City Education Center; Producer, Chiba City Youth Musical	Chiba City Education Center
3	May 27	Lecture, Hands-on Training	"An Educator's Mission and Duties" "The Present State of Computer Usage"	Elementary School Principal; Education Center Computer Specialists	Chiba City Education Center
4	June 16	Residential Training Workshop: Part 1			
5	June 17	Lectures, Hands-on Training, Discussions	"The Importance and Challenges of Classroom Management" "Leading Recreation" "Holding Campfires" "The Exchange of Information" "Improving One's Own Classroom Management" "Preparation for Being a Homeroom Teacher" "The Public Welfare System for Educational Employees"	Elementary School Principal; Members, Japanese Recreation Association; Education Center Trainers; Elementary School Teachers	Chiba City Youth Hostel
6	June 24	Lecture, Hands-on Training	"Teaching Swimming" "In-Pool Training" (Part 1)	Elementary School Principal; Junior High School Teacher	Chiba City Community Hall, Municipal Pool
7	July 1	Workshop	"Basic Knowledge of First-Aid" "In-Pool Training" (Part 2)	First-Aid Specialist, Chiba City Fire Department; Elementary School Principal; Elementary and Junior High School Teachers	Chiba City Fire Department, Municipal Pool
8	July 25	Lecture, Discussion	Theme Research (Part 1): "Selecting a Topic"	University Professor; Elementary School Teachers	Education Center
9	July 26	Lecture, Workshop	"Moral Education: Meaning and Methods" "Basic Principles of Verbal Interaction"	Elementary School Teacher; Verbal Communication Specialist	Education Center

	<b>Mo/ Date</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presenters</b>	<b>Location</b>
10	July 28	Lecture	"The Educational Value of School Events" "Museum Tour" "Preventing Accidents at School"	Elementary School Principal; Museum Staff; Section Chief, Chiba City Board of Education	Chiba Prefecture Central Museum
11	July 29	Lecture, Discussion	"Teaching Environmental Education" "Leading In-Class Groups"	Museum Staff; Elementary School Teacher	Chiba Prefecture Central Museum
12	Aug. 2	Lecture, Workshop	"The Importance of Audio-Visual Education" "Developing Materials for the Overhead Projector"	Elementary School Teachers	Education Center
13	Aug. 3	City Tour	"Tour of Chiba City's Educational and Cultural Facilities"	Elementary School Principal; Facilities' Staff	Various Locations
14	Aug. 5	Lecture, Workshop	Theme Research (Part 2): "Developing a Research Plan" "Teaching Penmanship"	Elementary and Junior High School Teachers; Elementary School Principal	Education Center
15	Aug. 23-26	Residential Training (Part 2)			
		Observation, Lecture, Workshops, Discussions	"Nature in 'Chiba Town'" "Hiking" "Exchange of Information"	Botanist	'Chiba Town' Lodge and surrounding area
16		Lecture, Field Trip	"Hiking"	Mountaineering Trainer	
17		Hands-on Training, Lecture	"Cooking in the Outdoors" "Orienteering"	Staff of 'Chiba Town' Administrative Office	
18		Lecture, Tour	"Tour of Educational and Cultural Facilities Surrounding 'Chiba Town'"		
19	Sep. 16	Lecture	Educational Consultation (Part 1): "Basic Preparation for Consulting with Individual Students"	Education Center Trainer	Education Center
20	Sep. 30	Field Trip, Lecture	"The Current State of Education for the Mentally and Physically Challenged"	Principal and Teachers of the Chiba City School for the Disabled	Chiba City School for the Disabled

	<b>Mo/ Date</b>	<b>Format</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Presenters</b>	<b>Location</b>
21	Oct. 14	Presentations, Discussion	Theme Research (Part 3): "Progress Reports on Theme Research"	Elementary School Staff	Education Center
22	Oct. 21	Field Trip, Lecture	Junior High School Observation "The Present State of Educating and Guiding Students" "Lesson Observations"	Junior High School Principal and Staff	Junior High School
23	Nov. 18	Lecture, Discussion	Educational Consultation (Part 2): "Educational Consultation Through Classroom Management"	Elementary School Teacher	Education Center
24	Nov. 25	Lecture, Lesson Observation	"Moral Education in Elementary Schools" "Observation of Moral Education Lesson"	Elementary School Principal, Vice Principal, and Staff	Elementary School
25	Dec. 2	Lesson Observation, Discussion	Theme Research (Part 4): "First-Year Teacher Demonstration Lesson"	Elementary School Principal; Program Participant	Elementary School
26	Jan. 20	Lecture, Discussion	"International Understanding Education in Chiba City"	Chiba City Board of Education International Education Consultant; Elementary and Junior High School Teachers	Education Center
27	Jan. 27	Presentations, Discussion	Theme Research (Part 5) Presentation of Results	Program Participants, University Professor	Education Center
28	Feb. 3	Field Trip	"Developing Skilled Individuals in Industry" Tour of the Facilities	Executive of Kawasaki Manufacturing, Chiba Iron Processing Plant	Kawasaki Manufacturing, Chiba Iron Processing Plant
29	Feb. 17	Lecture	"Human Rights Education in Chiba City" "Discrimination and the Basic Principles of Human Rights"	Educational Consultant, Chiba City Board of Education	Education Center
30	Mar. 3	Presentation	"Reflections on the Past Year of Training" "Following the Example of Senior Teachers" "Educators' Training and Personal Growth"	Program Participants, University Professor	Education Center

Field trips recommended by *Monbusho* include visits to local factories, schools for the disabled, social welfare facilities, special demonstration classes conducted by senior teachers, and schools of a different grade level than the newly appointed teacher's school.



*Monbusho* also requires a five-day, four-night residential training workshop. In both sites visited for this study, this workshop was divided into two parts to better fit with teachers' schedules, but also to give teachers two opportunities to interact on such an intensive basis, once when they are new, but also once after they have had a chance to get to

know one another.

The residential workshops, or parts of them, at least, are often conducted at a lodge in a wilderness area. Although some of the activities could be conducted in any setting, many activities take advantage of the natural setting, including hiking, tree and bird identification, and outdoor cooking. These are partially intended to be enriching experiences for the teachers, allowing them to develop bonds with their fellow trainees. However, since teachers are likely to lead their own students on similar activities during class trips, they also serve as training sessions on how to conduct outdoor activities.



**Training Cruises.** To expose selected new teachers to parts of the country they might not see otherwise and to teachers from regions and backgrounds they might not meet otherwise, *Monbusho* sponsors 10-day training sessions aboard cruise ships that visit various ports in Japan. In the summer of 1995, 2,426 teachers (of a total of 16,844 newly appointed teachers) were divided into six cruise groups. The funding for this program is borne completely by *Monbusho*.

Using one of the 1995 cruises as an example, the teachers departed and returned to Tokyo, visiting the ports of Nagasaki and Okinawa. While on board, they attended lectures and

held group discussions about various school-related matters, and attended music and recreation workshops. While at the ports, they spent approximately a day-and-a-half at each, visiting places of cultural and historical significance, such as parks, museums, castles, and war memorials.

**Change and Variation Since Implementation.** Since the implementation of the program, *Monbusho* has made no significant changes in its program requirements and guidelines. At the prefectural level, some modifications have been made in response to feedback from participants and input from planning committees. For example, in both of the sites visited, there has been an increase in the number of activities that require teachers to be actively engaged, such as discussion groups. Chiba City introduced a five-part theme research project that requires each teacher to prepare and present his or her own research project. Also, as noted above, both have split the residential training from one session into two shorter sessions. The topics within each broad category have changed somewhat as well. With the recent media attention given to the problem of bullying among students, this topic has been featured more prominently in both in-school and out-of-school training programs. As another example, many prefectures have begun to introduce teachers to volunteer activities, so that they may in turn introduce this topic to their students. For the most part, however, most prefectures and designated cities adhere quite closely to the guidelines provided by *Monbusho*.

As far as in-school training, if there have been any significant trends in the way the guidance teachers conduct the training, they are not known. Anecdotally, guidance teachers who have served as guidance teachers in the past have, with experience, developed their own training styles and methods. For example, one guidance teacher interviewed assembled the materials he has used over the years into a manual. He keeps it in a three-ring binder not only so that he can easily access the materials, but so that he can modify them as he sees appropriate.

### **In-service Training After the Induction Program**

After their first year, teachers participate in a variety of school-based in-service training activities, but most common are the activities surrounding demonstration classes, where a teacher develops a model lesson plan and presents that lesson to a class while other teachers and administrators observe. Often a discussion session follows where the teacher provides a more in-depth discussion of the lesson, including preparation, rationale for using certain techniques or materials, and special considerations for specific students.

Outside the school building, there are other opportunities for professional development. All prefectures and designated cities have Education Centers whose purpose is to develop



materials and sponsor training for school teachers. Intensive training sessions have been held for teachers who have completed their 5th, 10th, and 20th year of service. *Monbusho* has provided financial support for the 5th-year training since 1977, and for the 10th- and 20th-year training since 1993.

## Impact

Overall, the teacher induction program is viewed favorably by participants and other related teachers and administrators. Based on surveys and anecdotal evidence, most involved feel the program is a highly valuable introduction to the issues related to life as a teacher. It is generally regarded as having deepened the teachers' sense of their mission, provided them with valuable tools for handling future challenges, and created a heightened sensitivity to areas in which they need further improvement and which they may wish to explore on a deeper level in the future. However, similar to findings in the other case studies, there have been no formal summative evaluations of the program's success, such as assessing whether students taught by teachers who received the induction training perform better than those taught by teachers who did not receive the training.

## Introducing Change

When proposed, the new teacher induction program was supported by large segments of the educational community. Over time, most of those who originally expressed reservations and concerns about the program have become program supporters.

The only groups initially opposed to the new teacher induction program were the political parties of the far left and the teachers' union. At the time of program implementation relations between the teachers' union and *Monbusho*, were not as good as they are today. Specific concerns of the teachers' union included the belief that professional development is the responsibility of the individual teacher, the school, and the local district. It was felt that a national training curriculum was inappropriate since it was more important for teachers to develop a sensitivity to their own situations.

The teachers' union, faced with declining membership, was also concerned about the influence that *Monbusho* had over new teachers. It feared at the time that by requiring all new teachers to participate in an intensive training program of its design, *Monbusho* would effectively sway new teachers away from the union and its positions on various issues.

Since that time, the teachers' union has split into two new unions. The one that retained the majority of the membership has, over the past several years, taken a more conciliatory

stance toward *Monbusho* and is no longer opposed to the Teacher Induction Program. The other union is still officially opposed to the program.

## Reactions of the Newly Appointed Teachers

Teachers interviewed for this report all reported that when they first started the program, the number of days of training and intensity of the activities seemed excessive. When they finished the program, however, many of them were left wishing that they could continue, still having so many questions. While the in-school experience depended to a large degree on the personal relationship they were able to build with their guidance teacher, the climate of support among the entire faculty is frequently noted as one of the major benefits of the program. In the out-of-school portion, they welcomed the opportunity to meet regularly with those in the same or similar situations, since at their own schools, there were usually no more than two newly appointed teachers. Realizing that many of the problems they were facing were common to all teachers in their first year provided them with a sense of relief. They were also able to exchange ideas for handling common problems and to hear from other teachers of situations that they had not yet encountered, but would most probably in the future.

"Last year, as a first-year teacher, I was an assistant homeroom teacher. However, in May (the second month of the school year), the head homeroom teacher became injured and had to spend about a month in the hospital. I had to assume the duties of the regular homeroom teacher even though I had very little experience. These duties included maintaining contact with the students' parents. There was one student in particular where this was difficult because the student was chronically absent. I received a lot of useful advice from other teachers regarding how to deal with this students' parents. Although I can't say the student came to school regularly after I spoke with the parents, the situation would have been a lot worse without the help of the other teachers. In this and many other instances, they all pitched in to help me."

Upper Secondary School Teacher (2nd year)

Compared with their university training, teachers cite the induction program as being much more practical and directly applicable to school situations. For example, in Chiba City, one activity for elementary and lower secondary school teachers is a five-part theme research project in which they design a lesson plan targeted toward a specific goal such as "How To Increase Student Motivation Through the Use of Materials," or "How To Ensure That All Students Are Actively Engaged in Learning."

Because these projects are geared toward developing lesson plans, the "research" often involves trying out different techniques in their own lessons. One participant stated that this project was so closely related to class activities that it was difficult to distinguish the work done for the teacher training and the work done for her own lessons.

Based on 1995 survey results, 97 percent of participants felt the training cruises were beneficial. The most often-cited reason was the opportunity to interact with teachers from other areas of the country and other types of schools.

Along with the benefits of these intensive training activities came concerns about being given special attention and being separated from the school and their students. Despite a school atmosphere supportive of new teachers, some teachers could not help but feel intimidated by the confidence of the many teachers giving them advice and pressured by the implicit expectations and the special attention. To a large degree, these are feelings common to any person just starting out in a Japanese organization, but the systematic singling out of the new teachers may exacerbate this problem.

Furthermore, most new teachers were concerned that the time away from the school and their students might impede upon their assimilation into school life and the development of meaningful relationships with their students. For the lessons during which the teacher was attending training sessions, leaving or discussing lesson plans with the substitute instructor was an added responsibility. In some cases, this became a learning experience for the new teacher, who could benefit from the guidance of an additional senior teacher; in other cases, whether the students were learning and behaving while the teacher was away was a consistent worry. For some teachers, these types of worries diminished as they developed good working relationships with the substitute teachers and their students, but others continued to have these worries throughout the year.

### How Have You Benefited from the Induction Training?

"More so than content, the best thing about the training was that I was able to meet on a regular basis with others in the same situation. Although not everything I learned last year was applicable then, this year I can see the usefulness of much of what I learned last year."

High School Teacher (2nd year)

"At first, I was worried that I was struggling more so than I should have been. However, in the group discussions at the out-of-school training, I was quite relieved to see that I was not unusual and that many others were in the same situation — it was only natural that I was having these problems."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

"In the group discussions, even though we didn't have much experience, we were able to work together to come up with ideas for dealing with different issues. In one particular instance, there was a discussion about how to get boys and girls to interact better. This was a problem I was having at the time. One suggestion that came up was to make sure that when groups were made within the class for various activities, they include both boys and girls and not to let the students divide themselves. I did this for a school-wide activity and it worked very well."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

"The residential training workshop was very useful. Through some of the more physical activities, such as the recreation and the orienteering, I got in touch with my physical self, which although not directly applicable to instruction, helped me to understand that learning is not just a mental activity."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

"The most difficult thing was dealing with the children. It's very difficult to strike a balance between teaching to the group and to the individual. These type of problems were addressed directly by my guidance teacher in the consultations I had with her and in the topical discussions at the outside-school training."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

"My biggest difficulty was classroom management. During class the students would constantly barrage me with things not always related to the lesson. Some students would say whatever came into their head. One senior teacher at the school in particular talked with me about stating clearly to the students the rules for the class, establishing from the beginning things that were relevant and things that were not. As the year progressed, the students got better about following the rules for asking questions and sticking to the topic."

Elementary School Teacher (1st year)

One unintended benefit of frequently leaving the school building reported by several teachers is the sense of sanctuary provided by the out-of-school training. All teachers, but especially teachers in their first year of employment, can feel overwhelmed at times by the fast pace of school life. Attending the out-of-school training allows the beleaguered

teacher to step away from the pressures of school life and find support among a group of peers.

## **Reactions of Principals and Senior Teachers**

When the program was first introduced, beyond the formal opposition of the teacher's union, many more teachers and administrators had their own personal reservations. Building principals were most concerned that the number of training days was excessive and the reduction in time devoted to instruction and guidance would place a strain on the staff. The principals, the senior teachers, and the new teachers themselves were concerned that the time away from their students would slow the teacher's assimilation into school life. Finally, on a more general level, many senior teachers felt that the skills necessary to be an effective teacher could be acquired only through experience and could not be taught.

The provision of supplemental teachers went a long way in allaying principals' concerns about the strain on staff resources. Now, principals are generally supportive. Those interviewed claim that because of the program, teachers now appear to be acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge faster than teachers in the past. Asked to think back on their own experiences as new teachers, principals and senior teachers felt that although the other teachers in the building felt an obligation to assist them, the informality of this mentoring made professional development much more inconsistent. The teachers who were not shy about asking questions had a good awareness of their weak areas, and if they were so motivated were able to seek and obtain appropriate advice and materials. However, for the teachers who did not possess this degree of initiative, the first several years were rough. Furthermore, without the systematic introduction to all aspects of school life, it was often several years before teachers had a full grasp of the major school-related issues.

Note that although principals are more likely to say that devoting such a large number of days to training is more necessary today than when the program was first introduced, most are quick to add that this does not mean they favor any further increases in the number of training days.

Some administrators and senior teachers interviewed expressed the opinion that today's incoming teachers are less likely to ask questions of senior teachers on their own initiative. Some cited an increased sense of self-reliance among the younger generation, others an increasing fear of appearing to struggle. Regardless of the reason, the fact that the teacher induction program expects all newly appointed teachers to seek advice from more senior teachers minimizes the impact of this problem.

Regarding the question of whether much of what the program aims to impart on teachers can be gained only through experience, several staff members of the Education Centers and the boards of education responsible for the program acknowledged that this statement had a good deal of validity. They responded, however, that the program does not attempt to spoon-feed teachers and provide them with all the skills and knowledge necessary to be an effective teacher in just one year. Rather, the induction program is merely a systematic way of presenting teachers with a broad range of issues and situations that they will confront during their careers and to cause them to start to think about how they might approach these issues and situations.

## **Reasons for Program Effectiveness**

In discussing program effectiveness, it is useful to examine three types of factors: program structure, the personalities of the individuals involved in delivery, and program content. Based on discussions with program implementers and participants, it appears that all three factors play a major role. Furthermore, while no one factor alone is sufficient for success, two factors, program structure and the personalities of those involved in delivery, appear to be necessary conditions.

### **Program Structure**

Program structure is defined here as the requirements for the days of training for both in-school and out-of-school training and the provision of guidance teachers, subject specialists, and supplemental teachers. Program structure is important in that it ensures that all new teachers have the opportunity for interactions with their peers and with veteran teachers. Through their interactions with others in similar situations, newly appointed teachers not only gain a sense of reassurance and confidence from exchanging experiences, but they also learn a great deal from hearing the ideas of others about how to deal with various challenges. Some new teachers even say that, in some cases, it is more useful for them to interact with teachers who have only a few years of experience than with veteran teachers. They say the younger teachers, with their own first-year experience still fresh in their minds, are much more sensitive to participants' situation.

Based on participants' comments, any meeting of newly appointed teachers would be beneficial. However, such meetings might not take place as frequently, or at all, if the teachers did not have the support provided by release time and travel allowances. Recent program participants say that after the program ended, at first they met informally with the friends they made during the program, but that as their schedules became tighter with increasing responsibilities at the school, such gatherings became increasingly rare.

Regarding the experiences of new teachers at school, it is true that an atmosphere of support exists naturally; however, the structure provided by the program ensures that this support is consistent. Based on discussions with senior teachers about their own experiences as newly appointed teachers, the success of their transition rested heavily on their ability to develop a rapport with the senior teachers. Often, mentoring relationships similar to that which new teachers today have with their guidance teachers arose, but not always. Thus, by requiring that all teachers interact with senior teachers and that there will be at least one person on whom the newly appointed teacher can rely heavily, the program attempts to ensure that, to the extent possible, the development of mentoring relationships are not left up to chance.

Furthermore, one new teacher added that while it is nice to receive advice from many different teachers, advice from one teacher sometimes conflicts with that received from another. In these cases, having a guidance teacher appointed as the central figure in their training helps put the different bits of advice in perspective.

### **Personalities of Those Involved in Delivery**

"In the end, it is the personality of the guidance teacher that is most crucial to success. Different materials are provided by the prefecture, but successful mentoring depends upon the guidance teacher's experience and ability to communicate. For example, one problem in Japanese schools are the one or two students in each school who are registered, but who never come to school. In this case, materials can only do so much. The new teacher must see how experienced teachers handle the situation."

Upper Secondary School Guidance Teacher

All people involved in the program—either as participants or administrators—acknowledge that the personalities, knowledge, and abilities of the in-school and out-of-school trainers are a major influence on the success of the program. The primary method of program delivery is discussion (as opposed to independent research), thus the ability to empathize with the new teachers, make them feel comfortable, motivate them, and communicate ideas effectively is paramount. Teachers with these qualities are sought as trainers. Most likely, these types of individuals helped new teachers make a smooth transition even before there was a teacher training program. One trainer interviewed described the importance of the trainers' personal characteristics: "With a bad design and good trainers, the teachers would still learn, but with a good design and bad trainers, the teachers would learn nothing." In addition to trying to ensure that only experienced, talented teachers with excellent personal interaction skills are used as guidance teachers,

the program distributes responsibility for most duties so as to minimize the influence of any one particular individual. Program designers and trainers at the boards of education and Education Centers work in teams. Not only does this reduce the chances that the program would be negatively impacted in the case of a weak team member, but ensures that the program maintains some consistency from year to year as program designers and trainers are transferred.

## **Program Content**

Upon closer examination, the content of the program is also a major determinant of program effectiveness. The *Monbusho* and the boards of education who design the content of the program attempt to include a broad range of issues in the training. (See Exhibits 1 and 4.) It is unlikely that this range of topics would be addressed in informal mentoring relationships. The impact of this comprehensive training curriculum is seen in the comments of principals and other senior teachers who claim that teachers who participated in the training program adapt to school life faster than those in the past. One principal estimated that the knowledge that teachers gain in just one year of the program would take about five years to acquire through experience and informal mentoring alone.

Although the program provides only an introduction to most topics, prefectures and designated cities also include in their out-of-school training plans in-depth treatments of particular topics. One topic may be spread over several training days and may require the teachers to do substantial work outside of the training sessions. In many cases, teachers develop lesson plans aimed toward a particular educational goal, such as increasing participation or teaching a specific concept. While most teachers say this is an extremely enriching experience, it is unlikely that it is something they would do if they did not have the structure, guidance, and resources provided by the program.

## **Remaining and Emerging Issues**

*Monbusho* plans no major changes for the Teacher Induction Program in the near future, nor did any of the parties interviewed express any major dissatisfaction with the program. Many principals and other senior teachers who initially questioned the need for such an intensive program now support the program. The program participants generally feel that the training is worthwhile, and indirect evidence is supplied by the high rates of enrollment among recent program participants in optional summer training conducted at the Education Centers. Even the major teacher's union no longer officially opposes the program.



Based on our interviews, we uncovered few remaining and emerging issues. Those that do question the program's merit cite the same reasons that the teacher's union did when the program was first introduced, namely, whether it is appropriate for *Monbusho* to have such a strong influence over professional development. Some teachers still believe that taking the teachers out of the school and away from their students on a regular basis makes it more difficult for them to develop quality relationships with the students. Additionally, some feel that singling out a group of teachers for special treatment only reinforces the notion in the minds of students and parents that these teachers are not yet ready to teach.

When asked what they would change about the program, current and recent participants stated that the most useful activities, and the ones they wish they could have had more of, were the ones such as the theme research projects and the group discussions where they were actively involved in researching and discussing a topic. Activities that were thought of as less useful were some of the lectures, not because they were not relevant, but because the participants could have derived the same benefit from reading a book or article on the topic.

Some questioned the timing of the training. Certain topics were introduced that would not be relevant until their second year or later. For example, training for all new upper secondary school teachers included several lectures and discussions on how to be an effective homeroom teacher, even though 24 percent of the new teachers had no homeroom responsibilities and only 7.7 percent served as main homeroom teachers. In such situations, some participants felt the training would be more meaningful if it could occur when they were actually in the situation rather than a year or two prior. Thus, some felt it might be more effective to extend the training period and spread out the training activities so that teachers could take advantage of them at the time they were most applicable.

Among principals and guidance teachers, the only suggested changes were relatively minor ones, such as including particular topics for discussions, like bullying, volunteer activities, and how the revolution in information technology affects schools. Some guidance teachers wanted more flexible training schedules to accommodate other school activities. For instance, in-school training activities are supposed to take place within the instructional day, but some guidance teachers felt that allowing them to conduct them after school would be more convenient. However, some guidance teachers noted that such activities sometimes extend beyond school hours anyway, thus, it is not a serious concern.

## **Sustainability**

Having been generally well-received by all relevant parties and having the support of national law, the teacher induction program is likely to continue in its current form for quite some time. The support for the program seems only to grow as an increasing number of teachers have experienced the program firsthand and have a favorable image of it. The high cost of the program, relative to less comprehensive teacher induction models (see Chapter Two) might lead some to consider alternative uses for these funds, especially with a troubled economy. However, because the total cost of the program has actually been declining, due to lower numbers of new teacher appointments, it is less likely to be threatened. Furthermore, the program is mandated by Japanese law, making any possible efforts to scale it back or terminate it extremely difficult.

## **Adaptability**

Given the difficult transition faced by new teachers in all societies, a program similar to Japan's would likely bring about positive results in any school system. The more relevant question, however, is whether other education systems can afford or are willing to make a substantial commitment of resources to such a program.

One of the major reasons for program effectiveness mentioned earlier was the dedication of time to training activities. Without the time set aside, opportunities for consistent and substantial interaction with peers and senior teachers are limited. In Japan's case, this time exists only because there is a financial commitment to providing supplemental teachers. In school systems lacking the financial resources or commitment, a program of this magnitude is probably impossible, unless first-year teachers and guidance teachers were willing to use their free time for training purposes.

Another reason that might make it difficult to achieve success with a similar program in other educational systems is that the program is particularly well-suited to Japan's organizational culture. In Japan, it is the responsibility of senior members of a group to ensure that new members are assimilated appropriately. Thus a program that formalizes this relationship is more a reaffirmation of a natural relationship rather than a new system. Although many of the out-of-school activities involved group discussions and emphasized that there are different approaches to a problem, the program requires the newly appointed teacher to rely heavily on senior teachers for advice. This is consistent with Japanese culture where traditionally, the new group member is expected to follow the words and actions of senior members. In societies where individuals not only are expected to be

more self-reliant but who also are more likely to question the ideas of their seniors, such a deferential system might not be as effective or appropriate.

Even if an education system is unable or unwilling to commit the resources necessary to replicate Japan's teacher induction program, or even if its teachers would not take well to such intensive instruction from other teachers, there are some aspects of the Japanese experience that could be useful to other systems considering instituting a teacher induction program. First, a support group of peers most likely would benefit new teachers in any culture. Even if they did not meet as frequently as the Japanese teachers, and even if their discussions were less focused, simply being able to discuss one's experiences with others in similar situations would be of great psychological benefit.

Another feature that is dependent on money only in terms of degree of intensity is the idea of giving one teacher the responsibility for assisting a new teacher to make a smooth transition. New teachers may be hesitant to bother seemingly busy staff members for advice, they may not know where to look or whom to ask for assistance on a specific topic, or they may be unaware that they do not have a full grasp of all the issues relevant to them. While mentoring relationships may very well develop anyway, giving the responsibility of helping the newly appointed teacher to the entire staff can in reality mean that it is the responsibility of no one in particular. Designating one senior teacher as someone the newly appointed teachers should be regularly communicating with adds consistency to the experiences of new teachers. Even without a set schedule of meetings or a list of topics to cover, much can be gained from such a designation. The impact will ultimately depend on the personalities of the two parties, but having one teacher designated as the first point of assistance at the very least provides a starting point for the newly appointed teacher.

Finally, regarding content, if teachers in other systems are like their Japanese counterparts, they will respond enthusiastically to the opportunity to explore in greater depth topics directly linked to the classroom. Examples of topics include using instructional materials or teaching a particular concept. Having had several years of a theoretical approach to education in their teacher training programs, new teachers are much more likely to embrace more practical research. Again, not all educational systems may be able or willing to undertake this type of training to the extent that the Japanese system does, but even a brief training session of this sort would be of benefit to the teacher and student provided it were directly applicable to the classroom.

## **Conclusion**

Japan's teacher induction program attempts to systematize the process of transition from student to teacher. It identifies the key factors for success for those who have good first-

year experiences, such as the development of a mentoring relationship with a senior teacher and interaction with peers. And it tries to ensure this type of experience for all teachers. To this structure the program adds a comprehensive training curriculum that touches on all the major issues teachers are likely to face. And to ensure that new teachers and their guidance teachers have sufficient time for training activities, it provides supplemental staff support. Despite some initial opposition and skepticism, the program has been generally well received by all involved. While it can be said that the program succeeds because of the financing behind it, there are nonetheless key lessons for other education systems contemplating a teacher induction program.

## **EPILOGUE: LOOKING BACK ON THE FIRST YEAR**

It's been one year since I was suddenly appointed as a teacher. It seems as though the first time I stood up in front of the students to greet them was just the other day. Everything I did I was doing for the first time. Even though I was surrounded by things I didn't understand, I was filled with expectations and couldn't help but have fun during the first term. The students were even more charming than the ones I taught during my practicum, so I couldn't help but like them. I liked them so much that I disliked being taken away from them for teacher induction activities.

Suddenly, in the second term, the children grew up. Things I would have let go before, saying, "Oh, but they're cute," now became problems. So many events were happening at a frenetic pace. I was surprised at how much time and energy was required to prepare for the demonstration class I had to present. Beside the fact that I had less time to spend with the students, it seemed that every day at least one of them had some small problem or another. Even if I started working every Sunday morning, it seemed as though I could never get caught up with all the work I had to do. Psychologically, I felt worn down. When times were tough, all I could think about was quitting. At those times, the people I got the most support from were my friends from the teacher induction program. Everyone seemed to be struggling; everyone seemed to have much bigger problems. I came to realize that my problems were rather small in comparison. We took in the words of the lecturers like parched land soaks up water. When I was having problems with the children, being away from them (for just one day a week) proved helpful. Not only did it give me a chance to readjust my feelings, but it gave them the same opportunity.

When I ran into problems, because of the support of my fellow fifth-grade teachers, I could say to myself, "You are not alone." I shall never forget how their encouragement and assistance helped me to somehow overcome my difficulties time and time again.

During the theme research projects at the out-of-school training, it was rumored that I would present my project as a representative of all the newly appointed teachers. This in fact happened. As I thought, having all the other newly appointed teachers there watching me only served as encouragement. One fruit of the project was that through all the research I did to prepare my materials, I was able to improve my approach to teaching.

When the third term came around, I was surprised at how much the students had matured and gained in terms of composure. However, this wasn't solely a result of my influence. Rather, it was the combined effect of all the teachers. In particular, the supplemental teacher, who always taught patiently but firmly, helped the students, and me, to learn about so many different things. She never spoon-fed them, and never forced answers upon the students. And when they did come up with answers, she would always reply with more questions. The students were fortunate to have that type of teaching as their foundation.

During my first year, I met many people and encountered new experiences every day. This year spent alongside the children is one year I think I'll never forget.



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